

What is Claimed Is:

1. A method for controlling an air conditioner that is adapted to service an inside space, the method comprising the steps of:

identifying a temperature set point for the inside space;

identifying whether the inside space is expected to be occupied or unoccupied;

determining the humidity of the inside space;

determining if the humidity level of the inside space has risen above a predetermined upper humidity threshold level;

lowering the temperature set point for a first time period if the inside space is expected to be unoccupied;

lowering the temperature set point for a second time period if the inside space is expected to be occupied; and

wherein the first time period is shorter than the second time period.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein lowering of the temperature set point causes the humidity level of the inside space to drop.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of:

determining if the humidity level of the inside space has dropped below a predetermined lower humidity threshold level.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein, if the space is expected to be unoccupied, the first time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has dropped below the predetermined lower humidity threshold level.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the first time period is approximately five minutes.

6. The method of claim 4 wherein, if the space is expected to be occupied, the second time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has dropped below the predetermined lower humidity threshold level.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the second time period is approximately twenty minutes.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein, if the space is expected to be unoccupied, the first time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has risen above the predetermined upper humidity threshold level.

9. The method of claim 1 wherein, if the space is expected to be occupied, the second time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has risen above the predetermined upper humidity threshold level.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein the humidity level is a measure of relative humidity.

11. A system for controlling an air conditioner that is adapted to service an inside space, the system comprising:

means for storing a temperature set point for the inside space, an indication of whether the inside space is expected to be occupied or unoccupied, and a predetermined upper humidity threshold level;

one or more sensors for determining a humidity level in the inside space;

means for determining if the humidity level of the inside space has risen above the predetermined upper humidity threshold level; and

means for lowering the temperature set point for a first time period if the inside space is expected to be unoccupied, and for lowering the temperature set point for a second time period if the inside space is expected to be occupied, wherein the first time period is shorter than the second time period.

12. The system of claim 11 wherein the air conditioner causes the humidity level of the inside space to drop in response to lowering the temperature set point.

13. The system of claim 12 wherein said means for determining further determines if the humidity level of the inside space has dropped below a predetermined lower humidity threshold level.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein, if the space is expected to be unoccupied, the first time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has dropped below the predetermined lower humidity threshold level.

15. The system of claim 14 wherein the first time period is approximately five minutes.

16. The system of claim 14 wherein, if the space is expected to be occupied, the second time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has dropped below the predetermined lower humidity threshold level.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein the second time period is approximately twenty minutes.

18. The method of claim 11 wherein, if the space is expected to be unoccupied, the first time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has risen above the predetermined upper humidity threshold level.

19. The system of claim 11 wherein, if the space is expected to be occupied, the second time period begins running when the humidity level of the inside space has risen above the predetermined upper humidity threshold level.

20. The method of claim 11 wherein the humidity level is a measure of relative humidity.

21. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a computer program for controlling an air conditioner that services an inside space which, when executed by a controller, is capable of performing the following steps

reading a temperature set point for the inside space;

identifying whether the inside space is expected to be occupied or unoccupied;

reading a measure of the humidity of the inside space;

determining if the humidity level of the inside space has risen above a predetermined upper humidity threshold level;

lowering the temperature set point for a first time period if the inside space is expected to be unoccupied;

lowering the temperature set point for a second time period if the inside space is expected to be occupied; and

wherein the first time period is shorter than the second time period.